the employer or its employees in providing the services would have been ''idle,'' or if the services were provided outside normal business hours. An employer generally incurs no substantial additional cost, however, if the services provided to the employee are merely incidental to the primary service being provided by the employer. For example, the in-flight services of a flight attendant and the cost of in-flight meals provided to airline employees traveling on a space-available basis are merely incidental to the primary service being provided (*i.e.*, air transportation). Similarly, maid service provided to hotel employees renting hotel rooms on a space-available basis is merely incidental to the primary service being provided (*i.e.*, hotel accommodations).

(6) *Payments for telephone service.* Payment made by an entity subject to the modified final judgment (as defined in section 559(c)(5) of the Tax Reform Act of 1984) of all or part of the cost of local telephone service provided to an employee by a person other than an entity subject to the modified final judgment shall be treated as telephone service provided to the employee by the entity making the payment for purposes of this section. The preceding sentence also applies to a rebate of the amount paid by the employee for the service and a payment to the person providing the service. This paragraph (a)(6) applies only to services and employees described in §1.132–4 (c). For a special line of business rule relating to such services and employees, see §1.132–4 (c).

(b) *Reciprocal agreements.* For purposes of the exclusion from gross income for a no-additional-cost service, an exclusion is available to an employee of one employer for a no-additional-cost service provided by an unrelated employer only if all of the following requirements are satisfied—

(1) The service provided to such employee by the unrelated employer is the same type of service generally provided to nonemployee customers by both the line of business in which the employee works and the line of business in which the service is provided to such employee (so that the employee would be permitted to exclude from gross income the value of the service if such service were provided directly by the employee's employer);

(2) Both employers are parties to a written reciprocal agreement under which a group of employees of each employer, all of whom perform substantial services in the same line of business, may receive no-additional-cost services from the other employer; and

(3) Neither employer incurs any substantial additional cost (including forgone revenue) in providing such service to the employees of the other employer, or pursuant to such agreement. If one employer receives a substantial payment from the other employer with respect to the reciprocal agreement, the paying employer will be considered to have incurred a substantial additional cost pursuant to the agreement, and consequently services performed under the reciprocal agreement will not qualify for exclusion as no-additional-cost services.

(c) *Example.* The rules of this section are illustrated by the following example:

Example. Assume that a commercial airline permits its employees to take personal flights on the airline at no charge and receive reserved seating. Because the employer forgoes potential revenue by permitting the employees to reserve seats, employees receiving such free flights are not eligible for the no-additional-cost exclusion.

[T.D. 8256, 54 FR 28602, July 6, 1989]

§1.132–2T No-additional-cost service—1985 through 1988 (temporary).

(a) *In general*—(1) *Definition.* Gross income does not include the value of a no-additional-cost service. The term ''no-additional-cost service'' means any service provided by an employer to an employee for the employee's personal use if—

(i) The service is offered for sale to customers in the ordinary course of the line of business of the employer in which the employee performs substantial services, and

(ii) The employer incurs no substantial additional cost in providing the service to the employee (including forgone revenue and excluding any amount paid by or on behalf of the employee for the service).

For rules relating to the line of business limitation, see §1.132–4T.

(2) *Examples.* Services that are eligible for treatment as no-additional-cost services are excess capacity services such as hotel accommodations; transportation by aircraft, train, bus, subway, or cruise line; and telephone services. Services that are not eligible for treatment as no-additonal-cost services are non-excess capacity services such as the facilitation by a stock brokerage firm of the purchase of stock. Employees who receive non-excess capacity services may, however, be eligible for a qualified employee discount of up to 20 percent of the value of the service provided. See §1.132-3T.

(3) *Cash rebates.* The exclusion for a no-additional-cost service applies whether the service is provided at no charge or at a reduced price. The exclusion also applies if the benefit is provided through a partial or total cash rebate of an amount paid for the service.

(4) *Applicability of nondiscrimination rules.* The exclusion for a no-additional-cost service applies to officers, owners, and highly compensated employees only if the service is available on substantially the same terms to each member of a group of employees that is defined under a reasonable classification set up by the employer that does not discriminate in favor of officers, owners, or highly compensated employees. See §1.132-8T.

(5) *No substantial additional cost*—(i) *In general.* The exclusion for a non-additional-cost service applies only if the employer does not incur substantial additional cost in providing the service to the employee. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the term ''cost'' includes revenue that is forgone because the service is provided to an employee rather than a nonemployee. (For purposes of determining whether any revenue is forgone, it is assumed that the employee would not have purchased the service unless it were available to the employee at the actual price charged to the employee.) Whether an employer incurs substantial additional cost must be determined without regard to any amount paid by the employee for the service. Thus, any reimbursement by the employee for the cost of providing the service does not affect the determination of whether the employer incurs substantial additional cost.

(ii) *Labor intensive services.* An employer must include the cost of labor incurred in providing services to employees when determining whether the employer has incurred substantial additional cost. An employer has incurred substantial additional cost. An employer incurs substantial additional cost, whether or not non-labor costs are incurred, if a substantial amount of time is spent by the employer or its employees in providing the service to employees. This would be the result whether or not the time spent by the employer or its employees in providing the services would have been ''idle'', or if the services were provided outside normal business hours. An employer generally incurs no substantial additional cost, however, if the employee services provided are merely incidental to the primary service being provided by the employer. For example, the in-flight services of a flight attendant provided to airline employees traveling on a space-available basis are merely incidental to the primary service being provided (*i.e.*, air transportation). In addition, the cost of in-flight meals provided to airline employees is not considered substantial in relation to the air transportation being provided.

(b) *Reciprocal agreements.* For purposes of the exclusion for a no-additional-cost service, any service provided by an employer to an employee of another employer shall be treated as provided by the employer of such employee if all of the following requirements are satisfied:

(1) The service is provided pursuant to a written reciprocal agreement between the employers under which a group of employees of each employer, all of whom perform substantial services in the same line of business, may receive no-additional-cost services from the other employer;

(2) The service provided pursuant to the agreement to the employees of both employers is the same type of service provided by the employers to customers both in the line of business in which the employees perform substantial services and the line of business in which the service is provided to customers; and

(3) Neither employer incurs substantial additional cost (including forgone revenue) in providing the service to the employees of the other employer or pursuant to the agreement.

If one employer receives a substantial payment from the other employer with respect to the reciprocal agreement, the paying employer will be considered to have incurred a substantial additional cost pursuant to the agreement.

[T.D. 8063, 50 FR 52298, Dec. 23, 1985, as amended by T.D. 8256, 54 FR 28600, July 6, 1989]

§ 1.132–3 Qualified employee discounts.

(a) *In general*—(1) *Definition.* Gross income does not include the value of a qualified employee discount. A ''qualified employee discount'' is any employee discount with respect to qualified property or services provided by an employer to an employee for use by the employee to the extent the discount does not exceed—

(i) The gross profit percentage multiplied by the price at which the property is offered to customers in the ordinary course of the employer's line of business, for discounts on property, or

(ii) Twenty percent of the price at which the service is offered to customers, for discounts on services.

(2) *Qualified property or services*—(i) *In general.* The term ''qualified property or services'' means any property or services that are offered for sale to customers in the ordinary course of the line of business of the employer in which the employee performs substantial services. For rules relating to the line of business limitation, see §1.132–4.

(ii) *Exception for certain property.* The term ''qualified property'' does not include real property and it does not include personal property (whether tangible or intangible) of a kind commonly held for investment. Thus, an employee may not exclude from gross income the amount of an employee discount provided on the purchase of securities, commodities, or currency, or of either residential or commercial real estate, whether or not the particular purchase is made for investment purposes.

(iii) *Property and services not offered in ordinary course of business.* The term ''qualified property or services'' does not include any property or services of a kind that is not offered for sale to customers in the ordinary course of the line of business of the employer. For example, employee discounts provided on property or services that are offered for sale primarily to employees and their families (such as merchandise sold at an employee store or through an employer-provided catalog service) may not be excluded from gross income. For rules relating to employer-operated eating facilities, see §1.132–7, and for rules relating to employer-operated on-premises athletic facilities, see §1.132–1(e).

(3) *No reciprocal agreement exception.* The exclusion for a qualified employee discount does not apply to property or services provided by another employer pursuant to a written reciprocal agreement that exists between employers to provide discounts on property and services to employees of the other employer.

(4) *Property or services provided without charge, at a reduced price, or by rebates.* The exclusion for a qualified employee discount applies whether the property or service is provided at no charge (in which case only part of the discount may be excludable as a qualified employee discount) or at a reduced price. The exclusion also applies if the benefit is provided through a partial or total cash rebate of an amount paid for the property or service.

(5) *Property or services provided directly by the employer or indirectly through a third party.* A qualified employee discount may be provided either directly by the employer or indirectly through a third party. For example, an employee of an appliance manufacturer may receive a qualified employee discount on the manufacturer's appliances purchased at a retail store that offers such appliances for sale to customers. The employee may exclude the amount of the qualified employee discount whether the employee is provided the appliance at no charge or purchases it at a reduced price, or whether the employee receives a partial or total cash rebate from either the employer-manufacturer or the retailer. If an employee receives additional rights associated with the property that are not provided